

City of Tacoma
Citizen Police Advisory Committee By-Laws

Article I. Objective

The purpose and directive of the Citizen Police Advisory Committee (“Committee”) is to initiate and foster communication and involvement between the citizens of Tacoma and the Tacoma Police Department, and to provide the citizens with a voice in the development and implementation to community responsive policing policies, procedures, rules, training, and programs. The Committee shall review the investigative process and results of completed investigation of complaints as a way of evaluating the effectiveness of the complaint process as well as the effectiveness of policing policies, procedures, rules, training, and programs. The Committee shall review, develop and recommend strategies or policies to the City Council, City Manager, and the Chief of Police concerning Police Department policy. The Committee does not have the authority to investigate, review, or otherwise participate in matters involving specific police personnel or specific police-related incidents.

Article II. Organization

2.1 The Committee shall conduct its business in a professional manner.

2.2 The Committee shall elect a Chair and Vice Chair. Officers will be elected for one-year terms and will serve no more than two consecutive terms in any one position. Elected positions shall require a majority vote of the members. Elections will be held the last scheduled meeting of the calendar year, or as needed.

2.3 The Committee may establish standing or ad-hoc subcommittees, the members of which shall be appointed by a majority vote. Ad-hoc committees shall expire after their report has been approved by the Committee, or one year after the ad-hoc committee is established.

2.4 Members may be removed for misconduct. “Misconduct” includes, but is not limited to:

2.4.1 disclosure of confidential information in violation of City or State law; conviction of a felony, crime of violence, offense involving moral turpitude, or any plea of nolo contendere or Alford plea thereto; or

2.4.2 more than three unexcused absences from meetings in one year.

2.5 Any member who has three unexcused absences within one calendar year will be advised in writing of his or her attendance record and will be asked to become an active member or resign from the Committee. If the member does not resume attending meetings, the Chair will notify the City Council Committee responsible for oversight of the Citizen Police Advisory Committee of the lack of member attendance.

2.6 Removal of any member shall require a majority vote of the members.

Article III. Meetings

3.1 The Committee shall schedule at least 5 regular meetings per year at dates and times to be determined by the Committee. Special meetings may be called by the Chair of the Committee, or by a majority of the Committee members.

3.2 A majority of members shall constitute a quorum. Motions must be approved by a majority of members present. Members shall be defined as currently appointment member to the committee, not available seats on the committee.

3.3 All meetings are subject to Washington's Open Public Meetings Act. Members may attend meetings telephonically, provided at least one member is physically at the advertised location of the meeting, and that the voices of all members may be heard at all times.

3.4 Meetings may be electronically recorded. Minutes of all meetings shall be kept, and shall be made available to the public in accordance with Washington's Public Records Act. Minutes shall be distributed, at a minimum, to the Chief of Police, City Manager, and Committee Members.

3.5 The Committee may adopt procedures for conducting public testimony at scheduled meetings.

3.6 The Committee may adopt procedures for conducting public hearings.

Article IV. Items to be Reviewed

4.1 Agenda items for Committee meetings may include any relevant topic consistent with municipal code governing the Committees business.

4.2 In addition to other topics, the Committee shall review on a quarterly basis the following topics:

4.2.1 Police use of force statistics

4.2.2 Committee member outreach effort updates

4.2.3 Police conduct and police department policy complaint statistics and resolution

4.2.4 Contemporary issues for consideration as agenda items

Article V. Processing of Policy Complaints.

5.1 The Committee reviews Police Department policies, procedures, and practices. Policy complaints may be received from citizens, or the Committee may review a policy, procedure, or practice on its own initiative.

5.2 The Committee may receive policy complaints orally or in writing. Policy complaints may be submitted anonymously.

5.3 Any policy complaints received by a Committee member shall be referred to staff for regular processing. If the complainant provides sufficient contact information, the Committee shall request that staff send written confirmation of receipt of the policy complaint within 10 business days of receiving the complaint, informing the complainant of the complaint number and the date the complaint is considered received. If the complainant does not provide sufficient contact information, no confirmation is required.

5.4 The Committee shall review and discuss the policy complaint at a scheduled panel meeting within 60 business days after the date the policy complaint is received.

Article VI. Reports

6.1 The Committee may issue written reports. Minority reports are allowed.

6.2 The Chair shall assign a member to draft the majority report when one is determined necessary. Minority reports shall be drafted by the member/s requesting the minority report.

6.3 Copies of final reports shall be provided to the complainant (if applicable), Police Chief, City Manager, City Council, and Committee Members, others as necessary, and be publicly available.

6.4 An annual report regarding the work of the Citizen Policy Advisory Committee will be submitted to the City Council Committee responsible for oversight of the Citizen Police Advisory Committee by April 15th of each year.

Article VII. Confidentiality

All records and information therein shall remain confidential as provided by the Washington Public Records Act (Chapter 42.56 R.C.W.), Open Public Meetings Act (Chapter 42.30 R.C.W.), Criminal Records Privacy Act (Chapter 10.97 R.C.W.), and other applicable laws and policies.

Article VIII. By-Laws

8.1 These by-laws may be reviewed periodically, and a subcommittee formed for that purpose.

8.2 Any changes to the by-laws shall be voted upon at a meeting subsequent to the meeting in which the changes are introduced.

[updated with date revised by-laws are approved]